

of various kinds made to check the consumption, of alcohol in Paris itself have in a measure proved successful, the average having "been reduced during recent years from nine to seven quarts per annum per head of the population. But Normandy tells a terrible tale: At Caen the consumption is fifteen quarts per head, at Eouen it is over sixteen, at Havre it is seventeen, and at Cherbourg, eighteen. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that the depopulation of Normandy is proceeding apace, that the women, who are as much addicted to drink as the men, can seldom hear children, and that even, when they become mothers they are unable to suckle their babes. Thus one of the sturdiest races of France is perishing, destroyed by cider and potato spirit. The very children often drink on their "way to school, insanity flourishes, and immorality is widespread.¹

But reforms are not accomplished in a day; and in many instances authors may write in vain, even as the clergy may preach, if legislation does not come to their aid. In some matters even legislation is futile, and then reform can only come gradually, as the result of example and knowledge.

To improve the nation you must usually begin by improving the individual. If, then, Zola succeeded in his aims in individual cases — and the writer holds strongly that he did — he effected all that he could reasonably hope for. He did not stamp out vice in France, Neither

has the State

¹ In the autumn of 1902 the writer was a guest at one **of** the monthly dinners of the French. Society of Anthropology. Several members had lately returned from Normandy where they had been making exhaustive inquiries into the subject referred to above. The consensus of opinion was that the drink curse had caused greater ravages in Formandy than in any other part of Europe.